



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**
Celebrating 26 Years of Advocacy & Achievement

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June 16, 2011

To: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

From: Patricia Curry, Chair 
Los Angeles County Commission for Children and Families

**RE: THE NEED FOR THE DCFS OMBUDSMAN TO REPORT TO AN
INDEPENDENT OUTSIDE ENTITY**

We are writing to you recommending the need for the foster youth Ombudsman position within the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to the report to an independent entity outside of DCFS such as the Auditor-Controller's office.

The recent newspaper articles about the DCFS Case Manager who allegedly stole thousands of dollars from former foster youth emphasizes the need for the foster youth Ombudsman position to the report to an independent entity.

The Commission believes that having the Ombudsman report to the Auditor-Controller can provide quality controls, oversight, protection for youth and a more independent approach than is currently provided. An independent Ombudsman provides the atmosphere to ensure that your Board would be notified promptly of serious issues, investigations and corrective actions would be initiated in a timely manner.

Further, the Commission recommends that any youth applying for Independent Living Program (ILP) services, housing or funding be provided with a written statement of their rights, contact information of the Ombudsman and procedures required to file a grievance in order to resolve a dispute.

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Foster youth and those exiting foster care are among the most vulnerable youth in our country. The Commission respectfully requests that your Honorable Board consider the following recommendations:

1. Move the position and function of the Foster Youth Ombudsman to report to the an independent quality control department.
2. Require that each youth applying for ILP services, housing or funds be provided a written statement of their rights and procedures for filing a complaint.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

PC:na

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Acting Director, Department of Children and Family Services
Chief Probation Officer
Auditor-Controller
Children's Deputies
County Counsel

Recs to BOS Re The Foster Ombudsman

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